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Our Little Secrets

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY? WE DON'T THINK SO

Doug Giebel, a Friend of CounterPunch, tells us that a young was ferrying people to a private home near the mansion of Craig McCaw, the cellcom billionaire, in Bellevue, a ritzy district of Seattle, where Bush was appearing at a \$2000 a plate dinner. The lad had just driven eight people from a church to the home of some of McCaw's Democrat neighbors (they intended to picket in front of the house) when he got a call not to take the second load to the house, because the Secret Service had arrested all of the people, including the homeowners, and taken them to jail.

Apparently every policeman in the Seattle Metro area was massed in Bellevue to keep back the crowds of demonstrators.

WHO SAID THIS, WHEN?

"Let's be clear about several things. The United States will not slice this initiative apart and will not abandon it. And those who say no to the US plan - and the prime minister has not used this word - need not answer to us. They'll need to answer to themselves and their people as to why they turned down a realistic plan to achieve negotiations. This is a time for all the parties to the conflict to make decisions for peace."

Who said it and when and what was he talking about? We won't keep you in suspense, so-o, the envelope please, from Jeffrey Blankfort who recently posed the question.

It was... Ronald Reagan, on March 16, 1988, referring to the "Shultz Plan," advanced by Secretary of State, he (most recently) of the Schwarzenegger cam-

(OLS continued on page 2)

The Vietnamization of Iraq

Tunnel! Lights! Action!

BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Remember Groundhog Day, with Bill Murray? He played a tv weatherman, doomed to live the same day, Groundhog Day, over and over again. As this odd summer winds slowly down, we feel a bit like Murray. We've been here before.

Take the tunnel in Iraq, already filled with the Best and the Brightest (a sorry lot, if truth be told) reporting that there's light somewhere round the next bend but three. Here, for example, is Anthony Cordesman, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in DC, and on his good days, nobody's fool.

On Washington's carousel, Anthony Cordesman is a prominent fixture, currently headquartered in the Center for Strategic and International Studies, prime Republican think tank on K Street, where an elevator ride can confront you with museum pieces stretching all the way back to Reagan's first NSC adviser, Richard Allen. Cordesman has held down big jobs in the Defense and Energy departments, has served as Senator John McCain's national security assistant and strides confidently before the cameras whenever ABC News summons him for analysis and commentary.

Last December 3, from all his dignity as the Arleigh Burke Chair at CSIS, Cordesman issued a "rough draft" memo, that derided Operation Oust Saddam as the recipe for a bloody mess. Title of paper: "Planning for a Self-Inflicted Wound: US Policy to Shape a Post-Saddam Iraq". Theme: Operation Oust Saddam is an "uncoordinated and faltering effort." "We face an Arab world where many see us as going to war to seize Iraq's oil, barter deals

with the Russians and French, create a new military base to dominate the region, and/or serve Israel's interest...We may well face a much more hostile population than in Afghanistan. We badly need to consider the Lebanon model: Hero to enemy in less than a year." (He was wrong here of course. In Iraq it took less than a week.) The Iraqi National Congress, he sneered, was far stronger inside the Washington Beltway than in Iraq. Most of the existing structure of the Iraqi government was "vital." Iraq "is not going to become a model government or democracy for years."

What kind of economy would the US proconsul be supervising? Cordesman offered a reality check. Even before the Gulf War and sanctions, Iraq was plummeting from its peak at the start of the 1980s, when per capita oil wealth stood at \$6,000, as against \$700 now. These days, with a population expected to reach 37 million by 2020 (up from 9 million in 1970), unemployment stands at more than 25 percent, with 40 percent of the population under 15 years of age.

It didn't take long to run through Cordesman's eleven pages, and the momentum of the argument was clear enough, as clear as the same arguments were to Bush the Elder and his advisers back in 1991: Why get deeper into this mess? Let Saddam keep his security forces intact and butcher the Shiites. Offer protection to the Kurds and let the place stew under the weight of sanctions.

Now, here comes Cordesman again, with another memo fresh minted after an tour of inspection in Iraq. He titles it, "What is Next in Iraq? Military Develop-

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OUR *LITTLE* SECRETS

paigned, (in earlier years) in a less frivolous capacity of the Bechtel Corporation, which involved Israel leaving *all* of the occupied territories, that is, Lebanon, and the Golan heights, as well as the West Bank and Gaza. It was rejected by Yitzak Shamir who responded that "The only word in the Shultz plan that I accept is his signature." George Shultz was then Secretary of State. Reagan was considered the most pro-Israel president up to that time.

Six years earlier Reagan proposed another plan to get Israel out of the occupied territories. Menachem Begin's response was to start 10 new settlements within 24 hours, which mirrored his response to Carter when he tried to do the same thing. Reagan had a further humiliation when, during the siege of Beirut in 1982, he asked Sharon to lighten up, or words to that effect. Sharon's response was to bomb Beirut at 2:42 and 3:38 PM which are the numbers of the two resolutions calling for Israel's withdrawal from the lands it occupied in 1967.

Says Blankfort: "I'm sure neither Reagan nor Bush appreciated the field day that syndicated US cartoonists had about Shamir's rejection of the Shultz plan. One that I have shows Reagan and Shultz walking together and Reagan sees over his shoulder

that Shamir is cutting pieces of paper and throwing them in the air. Reagan says, 'Isn't that cute, George, he's showering us with confetti?' Shultz replies, 'That's our peace plan.' Another shows Reagan and Shamir sitting across from one another in arm chairs and Shamir holds a smoking gun, having just killed a dove that was carrying the 'Shultz Peace Plan'. Reagan holds up a finger and says, 'Believe me, Prime Minister Shamir, that dove was not about to attack you.'"

LEAVITT FOR EPA? WORSE THAN YOU THOUGHT

BY JEFFREY ST CLAIR

As a rule, secretaries of the Interior Department come from the West and directors of the Environmental Protection Agency hail from the East. Ronald Reagan breached this hallowed political tenet by picking Anne Gorsuch Burford of Colorado to head his EPA department, with disastrous results. Burford resigned in disgrace and narrowly escaped indictment. Her top aide, the ridiculous Rita Levelle, ended up doing time in federal prison for lying to congress, a fall girl for Burford. Christie Todd Whitman, the ditzzy director of the EPA under George W. Bush, announced her resignation in July to return to New Jersey and mull a run for the senate—a project almost certainly doomed following recent disclosures by the EPA's Inspector General that Whitman lied to the people of the New York after 9/11, pronouncing the post-blast air safe to breathe, when she knew it was a cloud of poisons.

Many DC insiders presumed that Bush might try to dampen the uproar about his scandalously pro-polluter policies by tapping a slick fixer for the post, such as William K. Reilly, who commanded the agency during his father's administration. But no. Bush the younger, following the flagitious advice of his political *consigliere*, Karl Rove, chose to follow in Reagan's footsteps by drafting Mike Leavitt, the Mormon governor of Utah.

Leavitt looked as surprised at the news of his nomination, which must be approved by the senate, as Dan Quayle did when he got the call from George Bush the first. Governor Leavitt has never shown much interest in the EPA, outside of battling to keep its regulatory arms from stifling the smokestacks of Utah's polluters. As the leader of a renegade group of western governors,

Leavitt sent a memo to the Bush transition team shortly after the 2000 election urging the new administration to transfer most of the EPA's regulatory responsibilities to the states. He even pushed for Bush to back a constitutional amendment giving states control over federal lands and environmental issues. Leavitt christened his plan Enlibra, which sounds like a bizarre apparition from the Book of Mormon but boils down to the environmental version of welfare reform.

Of course, Enlibra has already been given a test-drive in Utah with unnerving results. In Leavitt's 12 years as governor, Utah has outpaced nearly every other state in the production of toxic waste. The Beehive State, the 37th most populous in the nation, now ranks second in industrial pollution, trailing only Nevada.

But Utah may soon surpass its neighbor to the West, especially with Leavitt at the helm of EPA. Already, Utah boasts the two top polluters in the country Kennecott Copper Company, located in Magna south of Salt Lake City, and the third most toxic plant, USMagnesium Corp., whose deadly smelter towers over the shores of the Great Salt Lake in Rowley, Utah. As the sole producer of magnesium in the US, the company is a true monopoly and acts like one. For years, its smelter was the most toxic smokestack in the world, belching chlorine-laden gas into the skies of the Salt Lake Valley.

USMagnesium is owned by Wall Street raider Ira Rennert, who refers to himself as "a financial Houdini"—an appellation he earned by bilking bondholders out of millions and skating away freely. From his Renco holding company, Rennert commands a slate of corporations, including lead and coal mines, a steel factory and AM General, which makes both the military and SUV versions of the Humvee. In New York, he is known mainly for building the biggest and gaudiest mansion in the Hamptons, a 66,000 square foot palace with 29 bedrooms, 30 bathrooms and two bowling alleys. When EPA finally hit USMagnesium, then called MagCorp, with a lawsuit in 2000, Rennert crashed the company, filing for bankruptcy instead of paying the fines.

Leavitt, a dutiful recipient of Rennert's campaign contributions, lambasted the EPA for harassing one of Utah's finest corporate citizens.

But Rennert's revamped company faces new charges. The Bureau of Land Management, far from the greenest agency of the federal government, claims that USMagnesium has been systematically

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stealing minerals from federal lands in the Salt Lake Basin. Meanwhile, the EPA is attacking USMagnesium on another front, accusing the company of sluicing toxic waste into unlined ditches feeding into a 400-acre of pond of chemical sludge. EPA wants the waste treated before it is disposed. Rennert contends that his company is exempted from such trifles by 150-year old federal mining laws. Leavitt apparently agrees.

As governor, Leavitt's pet project was the Legacy Highway, a \$1.9 billion four-lane monstrosity designed to feed the every-expanding sprawl of Salt Lake City. There was a problem from the start: the Great Salt Lake and hundreds of wetlands that form one of the great shorebird nesting grounds in North America. Leavitt ignored pleas from environmentalists to avoid the wetlands and began paving them over in 1997, saying that he was fulfilling the Mormon vision of Brigham Young to transform the desert into an economic engine. A lawsuit filed by environmental groups and the mayor of Salt Lake City followed and last fall the conservative 10th Circuit Court of Appeals laid an injunction on Leavitt's highway saying it violated federal clean water and wetland rules — regulations Leavitt will be responsible for enforcing as head of the EPA.

In 1991, an outbreak of whirling disease struck Utah's trout population, killing thousands of fish, including rare native cutthroat trout. Whirling disease is the piscine equivalent of AIDS and now threatens native fish throughout the Rocky Mountain region, from New Mexico to Montana. The source of the contamination in Utah was traced back to the Rock Creek Ranch, a commercial trout hatchery owned by the Leavitt family. At the time, Mike Leavitt was director of the hatchery that spread the deadly infection. (He later resigned and turned the daily operations of the trout factory over to his brother.) The Utah Department of Wildlife Resources launched an investigation and found that the Leavitt business was operating without the mandated inspections and far beyond the scope of their license.

"It must be pointed out that the inappropriate transfer of live fish from [Road Creek Ranch] facilities not having the necessary fish health approval resulted in the transfer of *Myxobolus cerebralis* to other facilities," the finding noted. "The other private growers in the area were checked and found to be negative."

The Attorney General's Office filed charges against the Leavitt fish enterprise, citing more than 30 violations of state regu-

lations. Leavitt resigned his position as hatchery director and his company pleaded "No Contest" to the charges. Allegations later surfaced in the Utah papers that the ranch had intentionally dumped whirling disease infected trout into six Utah rivers. The apparent motive? To wipe out native populations of cutthroat and rainbow trout so that they could get lucrative contracts to restock the streams with their hatchery fish. By this time, Leavitt was governor and the head of the DWR felt uncomfortable in pursuing the matter. "I have not been able to take some of the actions I would have liked out of fear that I would do ... the Governor more harm than good," wrote Ted Stewart, director of Utah's Department of Natural Resources, in 1996.

Stewart had ample reasons to be cautious. In 1994, Leavitt purged 10 biologists in Utah's Department of Wildlife Resources, who had been holding up mining and logging plans because of concerns over rare wildlife. "I blame the political hacks from the governor on down," biologist Craig Miya told High Country News a few days after being fired. "They've gutted the agency for doing our jobs too damn well." According to Todd

open to paving and attendant development. Leavitt loves his roads.

Although the governor frequently attacks the DC elites, he does enjoy backing from a cadre of longtime Beltway insiders, headlined by Washington Post columnist David Broder. The increasingly addled Broder, who lately put George W. Bush on an intellectual par with FDR, annointed Leavitt as an energetic middle-grounder, although he admitted that he knew next to nothing about his environmental record in Utah. Nothing excites Broder, who describes himself as "an unabashed Leavitt fan", like the middle-ground, even when the soil is saturated with PCBs and dioxins. Broder declined to disclose the level of cancer deaths he would find acceptable as a judicious act of political statesmanship.

HOT FROM THE COUNTERPUNCH PRESS

Even now the printing presses are thundering (well, okay, presses don't thunder the way they used to, but what's in a word) as they roll out thousands of copies of *The Politics of Anti-Semitism*, edited by Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St Clair,

Leavitt ordered the paving over the wetlands in 1997, saying that he was fulfilling the vision of Brigham Young to transform the desert into an economic engine.

Wilkinson's excellent book, *Science Under Siege*, the replacement biologists were warned "to refrain from identifying endangered species".

Even some corporations view Leavitt with contempt. Earlier this year, the Outdoor Recreation Industry Association threatened to move its annual trade show out of Utah in protest of Leavitt's secret deal with Interior Secretary Gale Norton which prevented the BLM from designating any new wilderness study areas on federal land in Utah. The move opens up 6 million acres of roadless land to ORVs, mining and oil leasing.

In April, Norton and Leavitt sealed another backroom deal, which Utah greens dubbed the "pave the parks" scam. Under this novel agreement, old hiking trails and wagon roads through national parks, wildlife refuges and forests will, through the magic of bureaucratic re-labelling, now be considered "constructed highways" and

scheduled for official publication October 1, published in association with AK Press. List price is \$12.95, but get your order in now to Becky Grant and we'll get it to CounterPunch subscribers for \$10.50, shipping and handling included. Great essays by Edward Said, Michael Neumann, Norman Finkelstein, Robert Fisk, Yury Avnery, Bruce Jackson and many others, including long pieces by Jeffrey St Clair on the Assault on the Liberty and Alexander Cockburn on "My Life as an 'Anti-Semite'".

This is one hot book and later this fall the editors and some of the contributors will be talking about it in the Bay Area, Los Angeles New York and other venues. More details soon, here and on our website.

For orders call Becky Grant at 1-800-840-3683, credit card in hand or send a cheque to CounterPunch, PO Box 228, Petrolia, Ca 95558. CP

Trivializing Jew Hatred

BY SCOTT HANDLEMAN

Partisans of Israel often make false accusations of anti-Semitism to silence Israel's critics. The "antisemite!" libel is harmful not only because it censors debate about Israel's racism and human rights abuses, but because it trivializes the ugly history of Jew-hatred. A book published in 2002, *Anti-Semitism: Myth and Hate from Antiquity to the Present* (Palgrave Macmillan, 309 pp.), documents anti-Semitic myth and its extraordinary human costs. Unfortunately, *Anti-Semitism*, written by history professors Marvin Perry and Frederick Schweitzer, exemplified the "strongly polemical and apologetical bias" that Hannah Arendt once perceived in Jewish historians of anti-Semitism. In particular, Perry and Schweitzer subscribe to the myth of the uniquely ineradicable quality of Jew-hatred, and to the related notion that all criticism of Jews as Jews is illegitimate anti-Semitism. As I read line after hand-wringing line about the unparalleled badness of anti-Semitism, I felt transported to the Miami Beach of my childhood, trudging in a suit to some Holocaust commemoration or Netanyahu speech with my grandfather, Joe Handleman, a philanthropic pillar of the Jewish community.

Anti-Semitism, a form of racism originating in the nineteenth century, flowered in the rich soils of Christian anti-Judaism: the gospel tale that Jews were Christ-killers. Matthew 27:24-25 reports that "Pilate... washed his hands in full view of the people, saying, 'My hands are clean of this man's blood; see to that yourselves.' And with one voice all the people cried, 'His blood be upon us, and upon our children's.'" To Perry and Schweitzer, the singularity of the deicide charge is the golden key that accounts for the assertedly exceptional nature of Jewish maltreatment: "No other religious tradition has condemned a people as the murderers of its god, a unique accusation that has resulted in a unique history of hatred, fear, and persecution." Perhaps for that reason, they devote a chapter to the implausibilities and contradictions of the Passion narrative to the extent that it tends to incriminate Jews. Perry and Schweitzer make a spirited argument that the Romans were the real Christ-killers, and that the gospel authors fingered Jews in order to curry favor with the Empire.

The Middle Ages gave birth to a myth that Jews kidnapped and murdered Christian children. Two thirteenth-century popes, Innocent IV and Gregory X, denounced the blood libel as a lie; but in 1840, Pope Gregory XVI supported a ritual murder charge against the Jews of Damascus, and at the end of the nineteenth century, Pope Leo XIII or his representatives stated that "ritual murder is a historical certainty." In 1913, after a boy's mutilated corpse was found near Kiev, high czarist officials, hoping to foment anti-Semitism, conspired with local authorities to charge Mendel Beilis with ritual murder. Prosecutors bribed a witness but a jury of commoners acquitted Beilis. In 1972, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia said that "while I was in Paris on a visit, the police discovered five murdered children. Their blood had been drained, and it turned out that some Jews had murdered them in order to take their blood and mix it with the bread they eat on that day."

In the nineteenth century, with the invention of race, modern anti-Semitism emerged (although it had anachronistic precedent in medieval Spaniards' prejudice against conversos). Conforming their ideology to the social-darwinistic spirit of the times, anti-Semites now hated Jews because of ancestry, not religious practice. Perry and Schweitzer assign the proliferation of modern anti-Semitism to the work of "landholding aristocrats, generals, and clergy, often joined by business and industrial magnates," who used Jew-hating nationalism as a demagogic weapon. (Arendt makes the opposite argument that anti-Semitism blossomed as the Jews' power declined with the power of the nation-state; left with wealth but not power, they became prime targets for persecution.)

Existing alongside both Christian and secular anti-Semitism has been the stereotype of the Jew as money-grubbing Shylock. The Jews of medieval Europe, excluded from land ownership and crafts, became peddlers, an occupation which Christians then viewed as financially unrewarding and morally suspect. Around 1100, as commerce became lucrative and therefore respectable, Christians forced Jews out of trade, so Jews turned to the emerging field of finance, barred to the Christians by the

Bible's prohibition on usury. Over the next few hundred years, Jews became bankers and financiers to the rulers of Europe. By the mid-nineteenth century, for example, Jews, who were one percent of Germany's population, generated one-fifth of German economic activity. And a Nazi document cited by Perry and Schweitzer reports that out of 147 members of the stock, produce and metal exchanges in 1933, 116 were Jews. (On the other hand, even as Jews swelled the ranks of the rich and middle classes, a majority of European Jews remained poor, particularly in Eastern Europe. Even in Vienna, two-thirds of Jews were destitute in 1880.)

Perry and Schweitzer spend a chapter debunking the stereotype of Jew as innate conniving materialist, pointing out that the Torah and Talmud condemn mindless accumulation and commend charity. They explain the historical forces that relegated Jews to the fields of banking and finance. In the sole passage of the book that treats anti-Semitism as a historically comparable phenomenon, they relay Braudel's observation that Europe's Jews constituted a diaspora civilization like the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, or the Indians in Uganda, each of which groups came to dominate commerce in their respective areas, earning them enmity as "unduly privileged and prosperous" minority classes, and leading to doom in each case.

But in mentioning how the spectacle of Jewish wealth created resentment and contributed to the flourishing of anti-Semitism in the period leading up to Hitler, Perry and Schweitzer treat Jews not as the partial agents of their own unpopularity, but as blameless scapegoats, irrationally targeted by the eternally-lurking anti-Semites. Throughout their book, they effectively promote the notion that anti-Semitism has been eternal (at least since the gospels), a notion which Hannah Arendt denounced in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*:

"In view of the final catastrophe, which brought the Jews so near to complete annihilation, the thesis of eternal anti-Semitism has become more dangerous than ever.... this explanation of anti-Semitism, like the scapegoat theory and for similar reasons, has outlived its refutation by reality....

"It is quite remarkable that the only two

Their equation of anti-Semitism with criticism of Israel is typical of the reasoning of many American Jews, including a few personages who have the chutzpah to speak in all of our names.

doctrines which at least attempt to explain the political significance of the anti-Semitic movement deny all specific Jewish responsibility and refuse to discuss matters in specific historical terms. In this inherent negation of the significance of human behavior, they bear a terrible resemblance to those modern practices and forms of government which, by means of arbitrary terror, liquidate the very possibility of human activity."

Arendt inquired into the origins of modern anti-Semitism by looking at the modern historical functions of the Jew. She found the role of court Jews to be decisive. Jewish bankers allied themselves with whatever regime held power: "It took the French Rothschilds in 1848 hardly twenty-four hours to transfer their services from the government of Louis Philippe to the new short-lived French Republic and again to Napoleon III.... In Germany this sudden and easy change was symbolized, after the revolution of 1918, in the financial policies of the Warburgs on one hand and the shifting political ambitions of Walter Rathenau on the other." Thus, "each class of society which came into a conflict with the state as such became antisemitic because the only social group which seemed to represent the state were the Jews."

In Arendt's day, the theoreticians of eternal Jew-hatred hadn't needed to confront the postwar decline in anti-Semitism, since the war was a recent phenomenon and they might be forgiven for thinking the vile prejudice would soon resurface. By contrast, Perry and Schweitzer have to grapple with the fact that anti-Semitism has fallen into disrepute since the Holocaust. They mention a 1998 ADL finding of significantly reduced anti-Semitism in the United States. Frantically hunting for twenty-first century anti-Semites, Perry and Schweitzer ultimately range through the marginal turf of Holocaust deniers and the Nation of Islam, but not before stalking a more popular beast:

"The exacerbation of the Arab-Israeli conflict has generated a resurgence of anti-Semitism in Europe, even among polite circles.... In demonstrations held in many European cities in support of the Palestinians, Israelis were equated with Nazis,

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon with Hitler, and the Israeli flag was burned....

"What is most distressing is the way the press and intellectuals, who previously glossed over the Israeli casualties of suicide bombers, were quick to condemn Israel, often sinking into the ordure of anti-Semitism.... Accepting as true the grotesque Palestinian fabrication that a massacre had taken place at Jenin, the press in several countries accused the Israeli army of engaging in genocide." Thus do Perry and Schweitzer obliterate the massacre victims of Jenin with a method they impute to the hateful Holocaust deniers. ("Chronicles written by Jews. . . are disqualified as evidence.")

Putting aside the Jenin comment and assuming as we must that Perry and Schweitzer were the deluded victims of some crackpot occupation revisionist, their equation of anti-Semitism with criticism of Israel is typical of the reasoning of many American Jews, including a few personages who have the chutzpah to speak in all of our names. The premise of eternal anti-Semitism holds that Jews are forever the targets of irrational hatred: the collective behavior of Jews cannot influence its course. A corollary idea, popular in recent decades, holds that a strong Israel is necessary to safeguard world Jewry. And when people criticize Israel's policies and practices, it can be deduced that they are only the latest in the protean historical chain of Jew-haters, confirming the thesis of eternal anti-Semitism.

A neat circle of logic. Arendt saw that "the only possible movement in the realm of logic is the process of deduction from a premise.... Ideologies always assume that one idea is sufficient to explain everything. . . and that no experience can teach anything because everything is comprehended in this consistent process of logical deduction.... Once it has established its premise, its point of departure, experiences no longer interfere with ideological thinking, nor can it be taught by reality." The very heart of totalitarianism is the fear of self-contradiction that compels us to follow the chain of deductions—hence Hitler's "ice cold reasoning", Stalin's dialectic, military commands in the West

Bank. The inner capacity for freedom is the capacity to think outside the chain: "Over the beginning, no logic, no cogent deduction can have any power, because its chain presupposes, in the form of a premise, the beginning. As terror is needed lest with the birth of each new human being a new beginning arise and raise its voice in the world, so the self-coercive force of logicity is mobilized lest anybody ever start thinking—which as the freest and purest of all human activities is the very opposite of the compulsory process of deduction."

Too many of Israel's American supporters have stopped thinking, in submission to idolatry of Israel. Ironically, as Israel becomes more and more unpopular, the perceived identification of Jews with Israel could invigorate the now-feeble ideology of anti-Semitism, just as Jews' perceived connections to unpopular European rulers fanned the flames of earlier Jew-hatred. CP

Scott Handleman is studying law at Boalt, at the University of California, Berkeley.

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ments, Military Requirements and Armed Nation Building.”

Cordesman starts by announcing “It now seems likely that the United States will face some form of low intensity conflict in Iraq for at least 6-12 more months.” US military and intelligence personnel in Iraq “(a) admit on background that they have no real numbers and the situation is constantly evolving, (b) see some kind of loose regional coordination but cannot identify its scale and structure with any detail, (c) see the Iraqi threat as still more pro-Saddam and Ba’athist than Islamic but note there is no clear separation between the groups, (d) see a loose structure of cooperation between diverse groups that do not share a common agenda other than anger or hatred of the United States and secular change, (e) see growing numbers of young Sunni Iraqis entering the opposition as part of a postwar reaction to the U.S. failures in nation building...”

So is the answer more US Army forces? Cordesman says there simply aren’t that many available, would take months to train, and there are severe budgetary constraints.

What about the current bipartisan efforts in Washington, delayed by the terminal departure from Baghdad in a vertical direction of UN Special Envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello, to draft in UN forces to provide political cover and security manpower? “War and armed nation... require focused and coordinated efforts that cannot be run by a giant committee or carried out by inexperienced troops.”

Cordesman points derisively at the current assemblage of the Coalition of the

Willing in Iraq, involving 31 countries with troops there or getting there soon, with 11,000 from the UK, 2,400 from Poland, 1,800 from the Ukraine, 1,300 from Spain, 1,130 from Italy and 1,100 from the Netherlands. The other 25 countries have 24 different languages, lack standardized communications, and generally require U.S. logistic and transportation support.

This is where we begin to feel like Bill Murray. What does Cordesman offer as the way forward? It boils down to the traditional “nation-building” mix: a blend of the Phoenix program and Vietnamization.

Howard Dean on Iraq sounds a lot like Hubert Humphrey on Vietnam.

This sound familiar to our older CounterPunch readers? Let Cordesman say the words and you can whistle the tune.

“The United States must seek to win as quickly as possible, and it cannot win in Iraq by fighting on the defense... Unless it can hunt down and seize or kill the opposition, however, it will always see new successful attacks and sabotage.

“The key to winning in this offensive mission is not numbers, but intelligence, skilled cadres of expert troops, area and language specialists, mixed with constant civic action, and political warfare to win hearts and minds...”

“Losses are going to occur, and repairs

and reconstruction will constantly be at risk. No one can anticipate what will be destroyed, and popular patience will be at a minimum.

“Success will mean... throwing enough resources at the problem to overwhelm the pace of attacks. It will mean forgetting about oil revenues, about securitizing, and minimizing short-term costs...”

“Rush the Iraqis forward wherever possible: The good may be the enemy of the acceptable. Winning hearts and minds means putting Iraqis in charge as fast as possible even at the cost of political compromises and problems in efficiency. Giving the Iraqis the Iraq they want and can build is the goal, not meeting our objectives...”

“In Iraq, ‘cost-effectiveness’ will be a synonym for defeat, and doing things on the cheap will be a recipe for constant vulnerability. ‘Win through waste’ has always been the secret American recipe for victory; it will be in this case as well.”

So pinch yourself, open your eyes and look around. But hark! Here’s the sound of a man who has been touting himself as the voice of reason on Iraq, a man who counseled an attack only under UN sanction, now saying that the US must not quit, that more manpower must be rushed in. That’s Hubert... no, it’s Howard Dean, recently hailed by Katha Pollitt in *The Nation* as the man realistic, lesser-than-two-evil Leftists must back. And wait! Can it really be true? Who’s that, standing at the end of the tunnel? Can it be, is it... Hillary Clinton? Who better to preside over Iraqization, plus the privatization of Social Security. CP

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